

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
TOWN OF CULBERTSON AND DRY PRAIRIE RURAL WATER AUTHORITY
WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS**

TO: ALL INTERESTED PERSONS

Date: August 18, 2008
Action: Funding Water System Improvements
Location of Project: Roosevelt County, Montana
DEQ Funding: \$369,000.
Total Project Cost: \$571,293.

An environmental review has been conducted by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regarding construction of improvements to the Culbertson water treatment plant (WTP) and improvements to the distribution system for Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority (DPRWA). The DEQ proposes to provide funding for these projects.

The proposed action involves modifications to the Culbertson WTP including procuring and installing a 3rd unit for surface water treatment and installation of two new pumps in the Missouri River intake for the WTP. These improvements will be located in Roosevelt County Montana in Township 27 North, Range 56 East, Section 4, approximately 1.5 miles southeast of Culbertson.

Additionally, a water main will be constructed to loop part of the distribution system and serve the Culbertson Generation Station to be built by Basin Electric Power Cooperative. A 6-inch pipeline will be constructed from the existing distribution system to the site of the new electrical facility. This project begins approximately 2-miles west of McCabe Montana, and runs 2-miles south then 1-mile east and approximately 1/2-mile south-east. The project is located in Township 29 North, Range 56 West Sections 26 and 35, and Township 28 North Range 57 West Section 5.

DPRWA entered into an agreement with the Town of Culbertson in 2005 to buy up to 400,000 gallons per day of water from Culbertson. The agreement has been amended to allow DPRWA to buy up to 700,000 gallons per day. The proposed action will help the Culbertson WTP to meet the increased demand required by the agreement. The Culbertson WTP is currently operating under a deviation from the DEQ Standards for Water Works. The Culbertson WTP will still operate under a deviation but the proposed action will improve the reliability of the WTP by increasing its capacity relative to demand. The approximately 3½ miles of pipeline will provide a loop in the distribution system and also allow DPRWA to serve water to the Culbertson Generation Station electrical facility.

The affected environment will primarily be the Town of Culbertson and parts of Roosevelt County near McCabe mentioned above. The human environment affected will include residents and visitors of Roosevelt County, Montana. Based on the Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment, the project is not expected to have any significant adverse impacts upon terrestrial and aquatic life or habitat, including endangered species, water quality or quantity, air quality, geological features, cultural or historical features, or social quality.

This project will be funded with low interest loans through the Montana Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program, administered by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

The DEQ utilized the following references in completing its environmental review of this project: 1) the Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas, dated August 2002. The lead agency for the EA was the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Natural Resources and Conservation were cooperating agencies in preparation of the EA; 2) Design Report for Culbertson Water Treatment Plant Improvements, dated June 17th 2008, by DeWild Grant Reckert and Associates Company (DGR); 3) Contract Documents, Specifications and Drawings for Culbertson Water Treatment Plant Improvements, dated June 2008, by DGR; 4) Design Report for Basin Pipeline Project, dated July 2008, by DGR; and 5) Contract Documents, Specifications and Drawings for Basin Pipeline Project, dated July 2008, by DGR. These references are available for review upon request by contacting:

Marc Golz
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901
Phone (406) 444-6770
Email: mgolz@mt.gov

Or:

Clint Jacobs
Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority
P.O. Box 577
212 Broadway
Culbertson, MT 59218
(406) 787-5382
Email: dprw@nemontel.net

Comments on this finding or on the EA may be submitted to DEQ at the above address. Comments must be postmarked no later than 30 days after the date of publication of this FONSI in the newspaper. After evaluating substantive comments received, DEQ will revise the EA or determine if an EIS is necessary. Otherwise, this finding of no significant impact will stand if no substantive comments are received during the comment period or if substantive comments are received and evaluated and the environmental impacts are still determined to be non-significant.

Signed,

Todd Teegarden, Chief
Technical & Financial Assistance Bureau

c: file